

ASH PARISH GARDEN CLUB OFFICERS

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R.H.S. LONDON AND WISLEY

We are affiliated to the RHS who's benefits include competitive insurance cover, free gardening advice, a free group visit to an RHS garden, (54 members to visit Wisley club trip in Summer) access to medals (Banksian medal) and show stationery and a free monthly copy of The Garden magazine (see Brenda Winton if you wish to view). Our membership number is 10564709.

EDITORS NOTES

Brian –Stories to ernestperry33@gmail.com hard copy to Chris

GARDENING CALENDAR AUGUST

August is the first harvest month; it is also the time to begin tidying up your garden as the early-summer-growing plants begin to finish flowering and collapse.

Harvest

Now is the time to pick sweet corn, tomatoes, peas, beans, marrows, pumpkins, artichokes and glasshouse crops such as chillies and aubergines. Push straw or old tiles under ripening squash and pumpkins to stop rotting on the soil surface.

Protect

Tie in tall late-summer perennials to stop them flopping over.

Prune

Lavender and rosemary will have finished flowering by now, so lightly trim them gently shear the new soft growth, but don't cut into the older brown wood. Likewise, trim off foliage from strawberries once they've finished fruiting. In the middle of the month stop outdoor tomatoes by pinching out the uppermost terminal shoot.

Water

Water in dry spells, from a water butt or by re-using lightly used bathwater.

Mow

Mow the lawn at least once a week. Raise the blades if the weather is hot and dry to stop the sward turning brown.
Pick pumpkins this month as well as tomatoes, artichokes and glasshouse crops such as chillies and aubergines

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

AUTUMN SHOW 9th SEPTEMBER

HOW TO HELP OUR BEES**SURVIVE THE SUDDEN CHANGES IN ON OUR WEATHER**

A beekeeper offers tips for gardeners

FREEZING cold snaps and flooding in winter, followed by long, sweltering summers, don't only take their toll on us - they affect all species, including bees. Dr Hayley Jones, senior entomologist with the RHS (rhs.org.uk), says it is not so much the cold weather that affects the insects, but sudden changes in temperature due to climate change, which confuses them and damages their cycle.

"Historically, we've had a lot of cold weather. The problem is when it changes, such as a cold snap after a warm period," she says.

"When the weather warms up, the insects become more active, and tend to come out of their restive hibernation state. However, when the cold snap happens, they either expend a lot of energy going back into that state, having not managed to do any foraging, or they are caught unawares - and if they are very exposed, they could die."

To help gardeners help bees, Rowse Honey (rowsehoney.co.uk) and global charity Bees For Development (beesfordevelopment.org), share six tips for extreme hot or cold weather, with expert advice from professional beekeeper Amanda John.

To help them through extreme cold...

1. Grow plenty of pollinator-friendly plants

Planting a range of wildflowers throughout spring, summer and autumn is essential, so bees can harvest as much nectar and pollen as they need, creating honey stores in their hive for the winter, says John.

2. Create leaf and twig piles

Build piles of leaves and twigs for bumblebees, to offer them a cosy shelter from the elements. You could also build or buy a bee hotel for your garden, to help replace and restore lost habitat.

3. Avoid tidying fallen leaves and compost heaps

In open environments, bumblebees and other insects may form colonies under compost heaps and leaves. Avoid moving these, if you are likely to spend your time inside.

Expert view: "Honey bees are the only bee species in the UK that overcome winter as a colony," John explains. "In other species of bees, only the queen survives winter."

"Honey bees cope very well in cold weather; they form a cluster inside the hive and sort of 'shiver' to keep warm. In milder spells, the bees will fly around the entrance of the hive to orientate, and go on cleansing flights to relieve any waste.

"There is very little forage for the bees in the winter months, until the early-flowering plants bloom in spring. Therefore, the bees must collect enough food in the spring and summer to last the winter, which is why our continued support is so important."

And in a heatwave...

1. Give them easy access to water

While placing water in a tray or basin, ensure separate trays for all wild species, she advises. While birds may be able to drink water from basins, bees can't swim and can drown.

"Place shallow trays, with pebbles above the water level, so that bees can lay on them as they drink water." says John. "Alternatively, fill buckets with water and create landing pads, using bark and branches."

2. Leave some areas uncultivated

As individual bees struggle to survive without the support of their colony, leave parts of your garden untamed. For example, if a straggler were to leave its colony, small piles of woody prunings can provide shelter for the bee.

3. Offer food and supplements

As a bee's main diet comprises pollen and nectar, planting pollinator-friendly flowers in your garden will help support them significantly. However, if this is not possible, providing a 50/50 sugar and water solution would also help, offering a one-off energy boost.

Expert view: "Honey bees cope pretty well in hot weather. The internal colony temperature is

around 35°C, so they are used to working in warm conditions. When it's hot outside, they collect more water and fan their wings at the entrance to cool down the hive," John explains.

"If the colony is large in a small space, bees will beard (clump together) outside their hive's entrance, to keep the internal temperature cool."

Jones advises planting up your beds and borders densely. "More dense vegetation will provide shade and be a bit more resilient. You can help provide water and nectar for bees, by ensuring your garden is appropriately watered."

To find out more, visit Rowse's Hives For Lives programme (rowsehoney.co.uk/hives-for-lives), to protect bees and beekeepers worldwide.

THE MESSAGE OF THE GARDEN

A Symbol of Hope

When I weaned my son, I had been pregnant or nursing my children for seven years. I was exhausted, and the hormonal shift in my body set off a cascade of events that led to severe adrenal fatigue. I experienced panic attacks, hypoglycaemia, dizzy spells and terrible insomnia. These had been building for years, but I could no longer ignore the messages my body was giving me. It was time to slow down, take care of myself and heal. This even included not doing much in my garden, as I didn't have the energy to dig and haul and chop. Gardening keeps me going, though, so while I let many things go that spring, I did what I was able. My garden became one of my tools for healing.

One of the additions to my garden that spring was a pair of young pear trees. I mail-ordered them, and found a spot in the front garden. I took a few days instead of an hour to dig the holes, returning to my bed to rest afterwards. When the baby trees arrived, it was a windy day that threatened a hailstorm. At a mile elevation, thunderstorms are not to be taken lightly, but I needed to plant these trees. My mental health depended on it. So as wind whipped around me and thunder rolled closer and closer, I tucked these five-foot-tall, bare-root trees into the earth. I watered them, filled their holes with soil and said a prayer. I wasn't really sure they would make it, as many young bare-root trees have perished in my garden; the clay is hard to penetrate, hard to extract nutrients from. I wasn't sure I would make it, either, for severe adrenal fatigue can take years to repair and can even be fatal. The thunder boomed in response to my prayer of hope. But the trees did survive, and so did I. They haven't yet fruited; perhaps my own fruit is still ripening too, as I figure out what my own calling in life looks like - an ever-evolving process. What keeps us going as we find our own paths is hope; those pear trees give me hope.

LIFE GOES ON

Every garden is a prayer, a promise of hope. We don't know what will hinder our garden's growth. Hailstorms, drought, insects. Maybe life will call us away and the flowers will die of neglect. Maybe a neighbour's dog will dig up our carefully tended plants. We cannot know for sure that plants will grow, mature, be harvested. But we plant anyway. We water, pluck off pests, stake trees and pile on more compost. We hope. Perhaps this is why memorial gardens are so fitting. When we lose someone, we want to remember them through hope and life. In Denver, the Troy Chavez Memorial Peace Garden honours the lives of young victims of gang violence. The garden includes murals painted by local

artists and a statue of Quetzalkoatl, an Aztec spirit who taught people to be kind and to remember that 'there is something or someone greater than ourselves'. When a garden bursts back into life year after year, green and vibrant, alive after the darkness of winter, we know that life continues despite our fears and pain.

TO HOPE OR NOT TO HOPE?

A seed is the epitome of hope. Inside its hard shell, a radicle hopes to become a root. The epicotyl hopes it will gain enough nutrients to grow into leaves. Once a seed germinates, the plant hopes for the right conditions to grow fruit and then more seeds, that life may continue. I think of the parents who created the Troy Chavez Memorial Peace Garden, and I imagine the little seeds of hope they held in their own hearts that speaking up and digging in, while it could not bring back their sons, could offer healing and hope to others.

I had a science teacher in college who hated hope. He argued that when we 'hope' something will come about, we give up a sense of internal responsibility. We place the energy necessary for change in something outside of us, whether we hope that someone else will make something happen or that a higher power will magically induce change. He didn't believe in a higher power at all, again arguing that the only power that gets things done is our own. To me, however, hope pulls us forward. In the midst of the temptation to give up, that seed of something outside me that will help me continue, whether that be a simple garden seed, a pear tree or a whole garden, gives me the strength I need to keep going. I don't simply hope that the garden will flourish and then give up my own power, I grasp on to the hope that the garden provides me, and commit to the change and the growth that needs to happen.

THIS MONTHS RECIPE

Quick and Easy Vegetarian Curry

Surprisingly, for those who love their meaty curries, they may well find they do not even notice there is no meat in this dish.

You will need

A little butter/oil or a mixture of the two

An onion, roughly diced

Crushed clove of garlic

An apple, peeled and roughly diced

Sweet pepper (any colour)

A stem of leek, trimmed, washed and finely sliced

A mixture of whatever vegetables you have to hand peeled and diced

A handful of sultanas

Potato, peeled and diced

Flesh and juice of an orange or tangerine

Your favourite curry paste - or make your own from pounding and mixing spices together

Salt and pepper

To do

Heat the butter/oil in a large pan.

Add the onion, garlic, diced apple, chopped pepper & leek.

Cook until soft but not brown.

Add the curry paste or ground spices. Stir well.

Add the rest of the vegetables, fruit of your choice and the dried fruit. Stir well to coat with the curry spices.

Add enough water to cover. Stir again.

Bring to the boil and simmer until tender.

Taste and adjust seasoning if necessary.

Thicken with a little cornflour if needed.

Serve with fragrant basmati rice, raita, naan breads and pickles.

BORDER CONTROL

DAVID WHEELER

Summer inevitably draws to a close, but the thoughtfully planned flower garden blazes on. Many late-season perennials just can't stop giving, animated by flowering grasses swaying to autumn's nascent tunes.

I hanker for excess at this time of the year, to fortify myself against winter's onslaught. I crave plants with tireless flower power or an unexpected second coming, magicked by delphiniums and campanulas having a repeat 'go' if their spent June and July spikes are snipped off.

Still looking good are tall, pale yellow yarrows and comely flat-headed umbellifers. They contrast elegantly with the likes of stout blue monkshoods (*Aconitum*) or meld themselves among stiff pokers (*Kniphofia*) in citrus shades of lemon and pale orange.

Here too belong purple bobbles of good ol' lanky *Verbena bonariensis*, caged among burnished stems of such refined grasses as the pennisetum, stipa, miscanthus and panicum clans. The latter - thankfully clump-forming, not spreading - do well in poor soil. In varietal names such as 'Dallas Blues', 'Prairie Sky' and 'Shenandoah', they reflect the wide open plains of the American mid-west, where they roam freely among goldenrods (*Solidago*) and asters.

Sun-loving salvias, whether annual, biennial or perennial, are among the aristocrats of the late-summer border. Easily identified by square stems and, in many of them, a whiff of blackcurrant from their leaves, they bear long stems of uplifting, ripe-cherry-coloured flowers.

They bring valuable blasts of deepest purple, sapphire, pure indigo, ultramarine, cobalt and lapiz. They emerge from coal-black calyces in many varieties, especially 'Argentine Skies', 'Purple Majesty', the open and wiry 'Nachtvlinder' (Night Moth) or - with anis-scented foliage this time - any that carry the word *guaranitica* on their label.

Vastly different, *rodgersias* also claim some noble blood. Grown in moist soil in partial shade, principally for their majestic palmate leaves, they nevertheless bestow handsome though less showy plumes of flowers, ranging from white to pink and dark red. I especially value them for plugging gaps left behind by such earlier flowerers as lupins, whose remaining foliage is by now most likely mildewed and fit only for the compost pile.

Phloxes have unaccountably seldom featured in my late-summer borders. I grew some white ones in an all-white border a few years ago. I'm now ready to try some of the blues in a new interlocking series of blue- and yellow-themed beds. *Phlox paniculata* 'Blue Paradise' -seemingly more violet than true blue, and with a magenta eye - comes highly recommended. It's fragrant, too.

The wholly reliable and inspirational Marina Christopher of Phoenix Perennials in Hampshire (open by appointment) singles out 'Blue Evening', 'Cool of the Evening' and, to my ear, the Pernod-and-Gitanes-sounding 'Toits de Paris'. If it's pink you're after, try 'Utopia', 'Monica Lynden-Bell' or 'Rosa Pastell'. They'll grow to between three and five feet tall.

When licked by the flames of fiery *crocasmias*, *heleniums* become indispensable at this time of the year, in a range of long-lasting, daisy-like flowers strongly pigmented deep yellow, burnt orange, rust, red and almost brown. The Chelsea chop (cutting them back to half their height in late May) will result in manageable plants of about three feet in height.

I can't imagine a late-season border worthy of its name without the likes of 'Moerheim Beauty' (reddish brown), 'Dunkelpracht' (rusty red), 'Rubinsberg' (mahogany red) and, best of all, 'Sahin's Early Flowerer'. It shows striations of ochre, red and Dundee marmalade in a heavy crop of flowers which will continue until the first hard frost.

But I must stop. I could go on until the sun finally sets on these gilded borders and the first cold nights bring the curtain down on September's floriferous pageant.

SUMMER SHOW RESULTS

Most Points in Section 1 Flowers and Fruit

1st 48pts Penny Slack
2nd 33pts Hazel Chant
3rd 28pts Anne Poole

Best Rose Exhibit Class 74 Hazel Chant

Most points Section 2 Flower Arranging

1st 8pts Muriel Brodrick
2nd= 5pts Anne Poole
2nd= 5pts Penny Slack

Judges Favourite

Class 94 Penny Slack
